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Japan

Solid Wood Products

Japanese Plywood Production Drives 2003 Larch Log Imports from Russia

2004

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Report Highlights:

As Japanese domestic plywood manufacturing industry has shifted from hardwood to softwood plywood production, manufacturers are increasingly using Russian larch. Russian larch imports now represent over 45%, or 2,171,000 m3, of total Russian log imports and are up over 10% in 2003, from the previous year. Total log imports from Russia were 4,671,000 in 2003, up almost 7% from the previous year.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Tokyo [JA1]
[JA]

Imports of Russian logs in 2003 were 4,671,000 cubic meters (m3), up by over 300,000 m3 from the previous year, rebounding after a decline in volume of approximately 470,000 m3 in 2002. In 2002, Japanese log imports from Russia totaled 4,530,000 m3. Russia logs are principally converted into softwood lumber and plywood products.

Imports of larch, the predominant species imported from Russia, were up 10.4% in 2003 to 2,171,000 m3. Larch accounted for 46.5% of Japanese log imports from Russia. This is principally a result of the Japanese domestic plywood manufacturing industry shifted from hardwood to softwood plywood production, where larch is the principal input.

Russia is also an important supplier of sawn and manufactured softwood products to Japan. These wood product imports grew 10.7% in 2003, from the previous year. The growth was partly the result Japanese manufacturers shifting production offshore to Russia. Often Japanese manufacturers provide the financial and technical backing for Russian production facilities.

Imports of Russian hardwood were 244,000 m3 in 2003, up 25% from the previous year, as shown in the summary table below.

Japanese Wood Imports from Russia in 2003		
Product Line / Wood Species	Volume (000m3)	% Change (02/03)
Logs - <i>Ezo Spruce</i>	1,090	+ 7.1%
<i>Larch</i>	2,171	+ 10.4%
<i>Red Pine</i>	1,388	+ 1.6%
<i>Korean Pine</i>	22	- 3.8%
Logs for Solid Wood Products	4,671	+ 6.8%
Pulp Log Imports	160	+ / - 0
Softwood Log Import	4,831	+ 6.7%
Softwood Lumber Import	761	+ 10.7%
Hardwood Import	244	+25.0%

(Source: Japan Lumber Importers Association)

End of Report.